



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**  
THE MASTER CHIEF PETTY OFFICER OF THE NAVY  
2000 NAVY PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000

July 8, 2020

Goats, good day!

This year has been one for the ages. We've seen a once-in-a-century world-wide pandemic that slowed interaction on our planet to a crawl; we've dealt with going from the most robust economy in years to a most precarious debt and unemployment situation in decades; and now we find ourselves contending with nation-wide social upheaval, rooted in injustices that some on our team face every day while others have paid perilously little attention, being reminded once again that we have work to do in strengthening our One Navy Team.

While our leadership in the operational and administrative realms have done a phenomenal job navigating these issues with superior speed and dexterity, these challenges have exacted a toll - consequences of time and efficiency to the Navy's many routine processes, to include selection boards. Specifically, the Master Chief and Senior Chief Petty Officer Selection Boards were among the first to be canceled. The CPO Selection Board and subsequent initiation process - both essential and required steps to donning khakis and replenishing our fleet's needs, have also now been delayed by the COVID Pandemic by several months. As each of these boards moved later in the calendar year, it left the Chiefs Board - the heaviest lift of our enlisted board process, and the last advancement board we run each year - adjourning and forecasting results release perilously close to the end of the calendar year.

With regards to the Initiation process, this presents a challenge for us, as the board results may be released as late as the first week in December. While it would be nice to close out 2020 for those Chiefs who have been selected for advancement, to short-change the essential process of Initiation would be to concede that it in fact is **\*not\*** essential - and nothing could be further from the truth. So the Fleet Master Chiefs and I consulted with many different leaders, both within and outside the Mess for perspective, and have come up with the following schedule of events which the CNO has approved:

- Results release until Sunday, 20 December: during this timeframe, Chief Selectees and their families should be introduced to the Mess. They should get their uniforms from the NEX and begin the tailoring process; should have their charge books issued and/or vessels constructed; a BCA should be conducted, and any other administrative requirements should also be completed. Initial training and PT can begin, but this time should be maximized to prepare for the period that follows.

- Monday, 21 December until Sunday, 03 January 2021: this period is an inviolate holiday period for Initiation activities, during which only one on one activities will take place. Sitting down with a Selectee to sign a charge book on a duty day is a perfect example of how to use this time to pass on real leadership lessons and knowledge in the way we have done for centuries. There will be no organized events - no PT, no training nor other sort of activities, by Chief Petty Officers with Selectees or Selectees alone; this is being done in order to avoid any undue pressure on Sailors to not take holiday leave and miss spending much-needed time with family members. Units that are underway or deployed away from home port are exempt from this, and may schedule and manage training and other events as operations and their schedule allows.

- 04 January until 27 January: this is the intensive training period where Messes should put their Selectees through the Teaching To The Creed (TTTC) syllabus. Other training topics that have historically been included by CPO Messes as "additional items" should be carefully considered as extraneous, given the

timeframe we have to manage this transition and the paramount importance we have placed on TTTC. Ensuring each of our Selectees understands what is expected of them by leveraging our Creed the way we have done should be the primary focus.

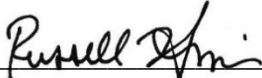
- 28 & 29 January: Final Night/Culmination Event and Pinning. 28 January should be the day Messes predominantly choose to execute a crucible event that ends in acceptance, with pinning on 29 January. As we have always allowed, Commanding Officers & Command Master Chiefs can communicate through their ISIC to their Fleet Master Chief or Direct Report CMC to coordinate moving that date if they have an issue and cannot execute the crucible event and/or pinning on the designated days.

As I mentioned, this indeed presents a challenge, but our Mess lives for the challenge – we thrive on it, and we will lead our way through it. It will take exceptional discipline to follow these tenets to the letter, especially adhering to one-on-one training only during the holiday period; that said, this is the most historic and effective way we have passed down knowledge in our organization for centuries, and to have such a period of time reserved to just that, and at such a reflective time in the process, may just be the greatest part of this entire event.

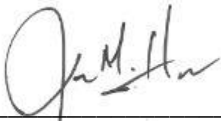
This entire process should center on the goal of acceptance by your Mess; the Chief of Naval Personnel has already determined that your Selectees are authorized to wear the uniform of an E-7; it is the process of enculturation and acceptance as a Chief Petty Officer that makes what we do so incredibly valuable, drawing Selectees into the fold as new Chiefs - continuing to learn, but ready on arrival to work within the Mess to make our Navy better together than we could ever do as individuals.

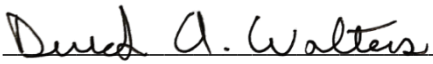
In any year, the continued viability of our Initiation process relies on the integrity of the Mess to successfully execute it, and we know that peer accountability is the single greatest strength in maintaining our highest standards of conduct and efficacy in training. We all police each other, we all help each other, we all intervene to save each other, and none of us will sink because we will all swim together. At the end of a very challenging year, I look forward to watching our Chiefs Mess step forward and execute yet another unprecedented challenge with aplomb – making the impossible look easy. Navy Chief, Navy Pride – HOOYAH!

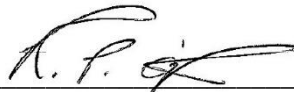
Very respectfully,

  
MCPON Russell Smith

  
FLTCM Wesley Koshoffer  
Manpower, Personnel, Training & Education (N1)

  
FLTCM Jim Honea  
U.S. Pacific Fleet

  
FLTCM Derrick Walters  
Navy Forces Europe/Africa

  
FLTCM Rick O'Rawe  
U.S. Fleet Forces Command